



December 2001

## Annual bike drive is holiday tradition for HE employees

by Jill Bohn, AFRL Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio — Each holiday season a group of employees from the Human Effectiveness Directorate (HE) come together not only to honor a former co-worker, but also to make a difference in the life of someone less fortunate. This year the group, known as Brian's Bikes, marks the donation of its 200<sup>th</sup> bicycle to the Montgomery and Greene County Department of Children's Services.

Brian's Bikes is a non-profit organization, which provides underprivileged children with bicycles at Christmas time.

The formation of Brian's Bikes seemed like a fitting way to remember computer specialist Brian Smith. The 30-year old avid biker was killed as the result of an automobile accident on August 28, 1996.

"When the folks from the Deployment and Sustainment Division decided to establish something in his memory, the choice was easy," said Cheryl Batchelor, committee spokesperson. "Brian would go out on weekends for marathon bike rides with family members or local groups.

"We are very excited about this endeavor and have actually looked to expand it to either directorate-wide or possibly including it as a CFC charity," according to Batchelor. The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the annual fundraising drive in which federal employees and military personnel raise millions of dollars for thousands of non-profit charities.

Over the years, HE co-workers have collected gently used bicycles and donations for the purchase of new bicycles. In its first year, Brian's Bikes was able to gather 42 bikes in just for months for the cause.

This year, proceeds from working a food booth at the base July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration and donations collected at the Thanksgiving lunch allowed the group to surpass the 200 bicycle mark. So far in 2001, 45 bikes have been collected and a Fairborn retailer has cooperated by offering a discounted rate on the new bicycle purchases.



*A HELPING HAND – Human Effectiveness employees assemble bicycles that will be donated to underprivileged children this Christmas on behalf of the Brian's Bikes organization.*

"It's a wonderful morale builder to get a group of folks together to put together bikes or fix them up," Batchelor said.

But, she notes, the experience is not to be outdone by the actual delivery of the bicycles to children's services.

"While most of the time you do not meet the actual beneficiaries, the workers at children's services are so thrilled to see us walk in, they are practically in tears," according to Batchelor.

In addition to much appreciated donations, the group is also seeking volunteers for the cause to help ensure its success.

If you have any questions on Brian's Bikes, or wish to volunteer your time to the cause, please contact Cheryl Batchelor at 656-4392. @

